

CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for distribution of image, of either still or motion type, and audio information to viewing locations, comprising:

means for independently receiving and storing in a central storage system compressed and encrypted image and audio ~~information~~files associated with at least one image program and at least one audio program for presentation at at least one preselected time;

means for independently distributing the stored image and audio ~~information~~files to ~~one or more~~ a plurality of auditoriums;

means for independently receiving the image and audio files in each auditorium;

means for independently decrypting the ~~stored~~ image and audio ~~information~~files in each auditorium;

means for independently decompressing the ~~stored~~ image and audio ~~information~~files in each auditorium;

at least one projection system ~~connected to~~ in each auditorium for receiving[[e]] the decrypted and decompressed image ~~information~~files and presenting one of the ~~at least one~~ image programs; and

at least one sound system ~~connected to~~ in each auditorium for receiving[[e]] the decrypted and decompressed audio ~~information~~files and selectively playing one of the ~~at least one~~ audio programs in synchronization with the presented image program.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein said compressed image and audio information are each stored in a non contiguous manner independent of each other.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein said image information is compressed at a variable rate.

5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein said audio information is compressed at a variable rate.
6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein said image and audio information is compressed remotely.
7. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 further comprising means for using an identifier to link one or more preselected audio programs with at least one preselected image program as desired at presentation.
8. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 7 wherein each of said audio programs comprises multiple audio tracks to be presented with the same image program during different presentation events.
9. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 136 further comprising a digital image generation system for generating the digitized image.
10. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 9 wherein said generation system comprises a digital camera.
11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 10 wherein the image programs from said digital camera are captured, encrypted, compressed and broadcast in real time to preselected authorized ~~presentation systems~~ auditoriums by said central facility substantially contemporaneous with digitizing of images.
12. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 9 wherein said generation system comprises a Telecine device.
13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 9 wherein said generation system comprises a computer-based workstation.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 further comprising means for storing the compressed and encrypted image and audio information in a central storage system for transfer at a later predetermined time.
15. (Cancelled)
16. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 further comprising means for receiving cryptographic key information necessary for decryption of the image and audio information at a separate time from receiving the compressed and encrypted information.
17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 16 further comprising means for storing and transporting said cryptographic key information necessary for decryption to authorized auditoriums at a time separate from distributing the compressed and encrypted image and audio information.
18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 17 further comprising means for receiving a time interval over which said cryptographic key information is valid and for assuring that said key is only used during the indicated time interval.
19. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 18 further comprising means for overwriting said cryptographic key information in a storage location after said time interval expires.
20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 further comprising means for receiving at least one watermark which is perceptually unnoticeable during presentation of the image or audio program at a predefined normal rate of transfer, but is detectable when said image or audio program is presented at a rate substantially different from said normal rate.
21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 20 wherein said watermark identifies both presentation time and location for the image or audio program.

22. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 136 further comprising a modulation and transmission system for establishing a wireless communication link over which encrypted and compressed information is transferred between said central facility and ~~presentation systems~~ auditoriums.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 22 wherein said means for transferring comprises means for broadcasting of said information to any one or more of the plurality of auditoriums to allow multiple presentations of said image program in different auditoriums at the same time.

24. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 22 wherein a transmission bit rate of said compressed information is not equal to a bit rate at which said information is compressed.

25. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 22 wherein a transmission bit rate of said compressed information is equal to a bit rate at which said information is compressed.

26. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 22 wherein additional checksum information is appended to said transferred information so as to allow detection of blocks of transmitted information in which transmission errors occur.

27. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 22 wherein said means for transferring comprises at least one satellite.

28. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 27 further comprising at least one collocated satellite receiver terminal at said central facility for monitoring quality of a satellite channel used for transferring compressed information so as to allow adjustments in transfer characteristics of said satellite channel to maintain a desired level of quality.

29. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 136 further comprising a two-way transfer link disposed between said central facility and ~~presentation systems~~ auditoriums over which data is exchanged.

30. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 29 wherein said data comprises data used for cryptographic security purposes

31. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 29 wherein said data comprises data used to request re-transmission of information received at said ~~presentation~~ ~~system~~auditorium with errors.

32. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 31 further comprising means for re-transmitting information having been received at said ~~presentation-system~~auditorium with errors over said two-way link.

33. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 29 wherein said data comprises various monitor and control inputs and commands transferred between said central facility and ~~presentation-systems~~ auditoriums.

34. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 29 wherein said two-way link comprises a dedicated telephone data link.

35. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 29 wherein said two-way link comprises a dialup telephone data link.

36. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 29 wherein said two-way link comprises a packet type data link.

37. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 29 wherein said two-way link comprises an Internet based link.

38. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 29 wherein said two-way link comprises a wireless data link.

39. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 29 wherein said two-way link comprises a satellite based data link.

40. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 136 further comprising a network management system for managing a network of ~~presentation systems~~ auditoriums to present images for viewing at authorized times and locations.

41. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 40 wherein said network management system provides operational control of each ~~presentation system~~ auditorium.

42. (Cancelled)

43. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the compressed and encrypted audio and image information is broadcast to pre-selected auditoriums at a given time.

44. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 43 further comprising at least one decoder/decrypter integrated into each image projection system within each auditorium to prevent wiretapping and copying of the audio and image information.

45. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 44 further comprising means for detecting physical intrusion into a projection system within each auditorium and for erasing of decryption key information whenever such an intrusion is detected.

46. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein said means for distributing is configured to distribute compressed and encrypted image and audio information for a single image program to different ones of said auditoriums with preselected programmable offsets in time relative to each other.

47. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 46 wherein said preselected programmable offsets are substantially zero so that said single image program is presented to different ones of said auditoriums substantially simultaneously.

48. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 further comprising a central theater storage system for storing compressed and encrypted image and audio information which is to be used for creating presentation events at one or more auditoriums.

49. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 48 wherein said central theater storage system comprises a data storage bank shared by multiple auditoriums.

50. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 49 wherein said data storage bank comprises an array of magnetic media storage devices.

51. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 50 wherein said array of storage devices comprises means for using parity information to link different preselected portions of compressed and encrypted image and audio information to different ones of said storage devices during storage and to a single auditorium at retrieval.

52. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 50 wherein said central theater storage system comprises means for parallel “striping” of received information across said array of storage devices to provide a desired data transfer rate and error protection redundancy.

53. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 50 further comprising means for storing a viewing history of authorized image programs presented in each auditorium and for reporting said history to a central ~~facility~~storage system.

54. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 40 further comprising a theater management system for operational control and monitoring of auditoriums within a theater complex.

55. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 54 wherein said theater management system further comprises program control means for creating program sets from one or more received individual image and audio programs, which are scheduled for presentation on an auditorium system during an authorized interval.

56. (Cancelled)

57. (Cancelled)

58. (Cancelled)

59. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1 further comprising a local theater network system for distributing stored information to one or more of a multiplicity of auditoriums.

60. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 59 comprising at least one local area network interface.

61. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the image information is provided in the form of image programs which are in the form of either a single still frame or series of frames shown as motion pictures of varying length.

62. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 136 wherein said means for transferring comprises at least one optical fiber network.

63. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 136 wherein said means for transferring comprises at least one high speed wireline based network.

64. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 136 wherein said means for transferring comprises means for wireless broadcast of signals containing said encrypted and compressed image and audio information.

65. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 136 wherein said means for transferring comprises:

means for storing the encrypted and compressed information in said central facility;
and

means for retrieving said stored information onto a transportable storage medium for physical distribution to said ~~presentation systems~~auditoriums.

66. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 65 wherein said medium comprises optical storage medium.

67. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 65 wherein said medium comprises magnetic storage medium.

68. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 65 further comprising means for archiving said medium at said central facility.

69. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 65 further comprising means for archiving said medium at said ~~presentation system~~auditorium.

70. (Currently Amended) A method for distribution of image, of either still or motion type, and audio information to viewing locations comprising:

independently receiving and storing in a central storage system compressed and encrypted image and audio ~~information files~~ associated with at least one image program and at least one audio program for presentation at at least one preselected time at each auditorium;

independently distributing the stored image and audio ~~information files~~ to ~~one or more~~ a plurality of auditoriums;

independently receiving the image and audio files in each auditorium;

independently decrypting and decompressing the ~~stored image and audio information files~~ in each auditorium;

receiving the decrypted and decompressed image ~~information files~~ at at least one connected projection system in each auditorium and presenting one of the ~~at least one image programs~~;

receiving the decrypted and decompressed audio ~~information files~~ and selectively playing one of the ~~at least one audio programs~~ in synchronization with the presented image program.

71. (Cancelled)

72. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 70 further comprising storing said compressed image and audio information in a non contiguous manner independent of each other.

73. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 70 wherein said image information is compressed at a variable rate.

74. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 70 wherein said audio information is compressed at a variable rate.

75. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 70 wherein said image and audio information is compressed remotely.

76. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 70 further comprising using an identifier to link one or more preselected audio programs with at least one preselected image program as desired at presentation.

77. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 76 wherein each of said audio programs comprises multiple audio tracks to be presented with the same image program during different presentation events.

78. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 143 further comprising generating the digitized image using a digital image generation system.

79. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 78 comprising further using a digital camera for said generating.

80. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 79 further comprising capturing, encrypting, compressing and broadcasting the digitized images from said digital camera to

preselected authorized ~~presentation systems~~ auditoriums through said central ~~facility~~ storage system substantially contemporaneous with digitizing of images.

81. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 78 comprising using a computer based workstation for said generating.

82. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 70 further comprising storing the compressed and encrypted image and audio information in a central storage system for transfer at a later predetermined time.

83. (Cancelled)

84. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 70 further comprising receiving cryptographic key information necessary for decryption to authorized auditoriums at a time separate from said receiving of the encrypted and compressed information.

85. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim ~~[[83]]~~ 84 further comprising receiving a time interval over which said cryptographic key information is valid and assuring that said key is only used during that interval.

86. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 85 further comprising overwriting said cryptographic key information in a storage location after said time interval expires.

87. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 70 further comprising receiving at least one watermark which is perceptually unnoticeable during presentation of the image or audio program at a predefined normal rate of transfer, but is detectable when said image or audio program is presented at a rate substantially different from said normal rate.

88. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 87 wherein said watermark identifies both a presentation time and a location for the image or audio program.

89. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 143 further comprising modulating and transmitting the encrypted and compressed information over a wireless communication link between said central ~~facility-storage system~~ and ~~presentation systems~~ auditoriums.

90. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 89 comprising broadcasting said encrypted and compressed information to any one or more of a plurality of theater auditoriums to allow multiple presentations of said image program in different auditoriums at the same time.

91. (Original) The method of Claim 89 comprising using a transmission bit rate for compressed information that is not equal to a bit rate at which said information is compressed.

92. (Original) The method of Claim 89 comprising using a transmission bit rate for compressed information is equal to a bit rate at which said information is compressed.

93. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 89 comprising appending checksum information to said transferred information so as to allow detection of blocks of transmitted information in which transmission errors occur.

94. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 89 comprising using at least one satellite for transferring the information to said ~~presentation systems~~ auditoriums.

95. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 94 further comprising collocating at least one satellite receiver terminal at said central ~~facility-storage system~~ and monitoring quality of a satellite channel used for transferring compressed information therewith, so as to allow adjusting transfer characteristics of said satellite channel to maintain a desired level of quality.

96. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 136 further comprising exchanging data over a two-way transfer link disposed between said central facility and auditoriums ~~presentation systems~~.

97. (Original) The method of Claim 96 comprising using said data for cryptographic security purposes
98. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 96 requesting re-transmission of information received at said auditoriums ~~presentation system~~ with errors.
99. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 98 further comprising re-transmitting information having been received at said auditoriums ~~presentation system~~ with errors over said two-way link.
100. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 96 wherein said data comprises various monitor and control inputs and commands transferred between said central facility and ~~presentation systems~~ auditoriums.
101. (Original) The method of Claim 96 comprising using a dedicated telephone data link as said two-way link.
102. (Original) The method of Claim 96 comprising using a dialup telephone data link as said two-way link.
103. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 96 comprising using a packet type data link as said two-way link.
104. (Original) The method of Claim 96 comprising using an Internet based link as said two-way link.
105. (Original) The method of Claim 96 comprising using a wireless data link as said two-way link.
106. (Original) The method of Claim 96 comprising using a satellite based data link as said two-way link.

107. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 70 further comprising a network management system for managing a network of ~~presentation systems~~ auditoriums to present images for viewing at authorized times and locations.

108. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 107 wherein said network management system provides operational control of each ~~presentation system~~ auditorium.

109. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 70 comprising configuring each ~~presentation system~~ auditorium as a theater with at least one auditorium.

110. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 109 comprising broadcasting information to pre-selected auditoriums within a multiplicity of ~~presentation systems~~ auditoriums at a given time.

111. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 109 further comprising integrating at least one decoder/decrypter into each image projector within each auditorium to prevent wiretapping and copying.

112. (Original) The method of Claim 111 further comprising detecting physical intrusion into a projection system for an auditorium system and for erasure of decryption key information whenever such an intrusion is detected.

113. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 82 further comprising transferring compressed and encrypted image and audio information for a single image program to different ones of said auditoriums in a complex of multiple auditoriums in a theater with preselected programmable offsets in time relative to each other.

114. (Original) The method of Claim 113 comprising reducing said preselected programmable offsets to be substantially zero so that said single image program is presented to different ones of said auditoriums substantially simultaneously.

115. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 109 further storing compressed and encrypted image and audio information which is to be used for creating presentation events at one or more auditoriums in a central theater storage system.

116. (Original) The method of Claim 115 comprising using an array of magnetic media storage devices as said central theater storage system.

117. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 116 comprising using parity information to link different preselected portions of encrypted and compressed image and audio information to different ones of said devices during storage and to a single auditorium at retrieval.

118. (Original) The method of Claim 116 comprising parallel “striping” of received information across said array of storage devices to provide a desired data transfer rate and error protection redundancy.

119. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 116 further comprising storing a viewing history of authorized image program presented in each auditorium and reporting said history to a central storage system~~facility~~.

120. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 109 further comprising controlling the operation of and monitoring of auditoriums within a theater complex using a theater management system.

121. (Original) The method of Claim 120 further comprising creating program sets within said theater management system from one or more received individual image and audio programs, which are scheduled for presentation on an auditorium system during an authorized interval.

122. (Cancelled)

123. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 120 further comprising automatically distributing, storing, and presenting programs under programmable control from a control element remote from said central storage system~~facility~~

124. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 120 further comprising controlling certain preselected network operations from a location remote from said central storage system~~facility~~.

125. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 120 further comprising distributing stored information to one or more of a multiplicity of auditorium locations for presentation to an audience over a local theater network system.

126. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 70 further comprising providing image information in the form of image programs which are in the form of either a single still frame or series of frames shown as motion pictures of varying length.

127. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 143 wherein said transferring comprises using at least one optical fiber network.

128. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 143 wherein said transferring comprises using at least one high speed wireline based network.

129. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 143 wherein said transferring comprises: storing encrypted and compressed information in said central storage system~~facility~~; retrieving said stored information onto a transportable storage medium for physical distribution to said auditoriums ~~presentation systems~~; and retrieving said stored information on said medium and transferring it to said auditoriums ~~presentation system storage~~

130. (Original) The method of Claim 129 wherein said medium comprises optical storage medium.

131. (Original) The method of Claim 129 wherein said medium comprises magnetic storage medium.

132. (Currently Amended) The method s of Claim 129 further comprising archiving said medium at said central storage system facility

133. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 129 further comprising archiving said medium at said auditoriums presentation system.

134. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 143 wherein said transferring step comprises using at least one high speed wireline based network.

135. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 143 comprising employing redundancy in said central storage system facility and auditoriums presentation systems for preselected functions for assuring reliable operation in a variety of anticipated operating situations.

136. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for distribution of digitized image, of either still or motion type, and audio information to viewing locations, comprising:

at least one a central facility for ~~independently~~ receiving and storing digitized image and audio information;

means for ~~independently~~ encrypting the digitized image and audio information;

means for ~~independently~~ compressing the encrypted image and audio information;

means for ~~independently~~ transferring the compressed and encrypted image and audio information as program information files to ~~one or more remotely located presentation systems, each presentation system comprising~~ a plurality of auditoriums at a preselected time.

137. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 136 further comprising means for providing cryptographic key information necessary for decryption of information to authorized auditoriums presentation systems at a separate time from said transferring the compressed and encrypted information.

138. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 137 further comprising means for storing and transporting said cryptographic key information.

139. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 138 further comprising means for indicating a time interval over which said cryptographic key information is valid and for assuring that said key is only used during the indicated time interval.

140. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 139 further comprising means for overwriting said cryptographic key information in a storage location after said time interval expires.

141. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 136 further comprising means for adding at least one watermark which is perceptually unnoticeable during presentation of the image or audio program at a predefined normal rate of transfer, but is detectable when said image or audio program is presented at a rate substantially different from said normal rate.

142. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 20 wherein said watermark identifies both presentation time and location for the image or audio program.

143. (Currently Amended) A method for distribution of digitized image, of either still or motion type, and audio information to viewing locations, comprising:

~~independently~~receiving and storing in a central storage system digitized image and audio information;

~~independently~~encrypting the digitized image and audio information;

~~independently~~compressing the encrypted image and audio information;

~~independently~~transferring ~~the the~~ compressed and encrypted image and audio information as image and audio information files to one or more remotely located presentation systems, each presentation system comprising a plurality of remotely located auditoriums at a preselected time.

144. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 143 further comprising storing compressed and encrypted image and audio information in said central ~~facility~~ storage system for transfer at a later predetermined time.

145. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 143 further comprising encrypting said information at said central storage system ~~facility~~ and decrypting resulting encrypted information at said auditoriums ~~presentation system~~.

146. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 145 further comprising storing and transporting cryptographic key information necessary for decryption to authorized auditoriums ~~presentation systems~~ at a time separate from said transferring of the encrypted and compressed information.

147. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 145 further comprising indicating a time interval over which said cryptographic key information is valid and assuring that said key is only used during that interval.

148. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 147 further comprising overwriting said cryptographic key information in a storage location after said time interval expires.

149. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 143 further comprising adding at least one watermark which is perceptually unnoticeable during presentation of image or audio program at a predefined normal rate of transfer, but is detectable when said image or audio program is presented at a rate substantially different from said normal rate.

150. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 149 further comprising configuring said watermark to identify both a presentation time and a location for the image or audio program.